

painting armour

Digital Painting Downloadable Tutorial Series

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Medieval

painting armour

Chapter 01

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Fig01

GATHER INFORMATION

The first thing I usually do when I get a project is to collect all of the reference material that I am going to need. Most of the time you can find everything you need by just 'Googling' it. **Fig01** shows images taken from different museum websites. It is a good idea to start building up a large reference folder on your computer so that the next time you need some armour reference you will already have it. Now that we have our reference material, we can start the illustration.

GETTING READY

This painting is going to be done primarily in Photoshop CS2, with a little bit of Painter IX at the end. I have included the Photoshop CS2 brushes that I have used so that you can try them out too. To load them, just click on the brush tool and then right-click on the canvas. Your brush menu should now open. In the top right corner is a small triangle button - click on it and go to "Load Brushes", then select the file that is included in this tutorial. As for what size of a file you should work in, I always paint at 300dpi and usually around 3000 pixels wide. This artwork is 2404x2905.

THE BLOCK IN

Start by blocking in the main shapes of the figure (**Fig02**). At this point you are just trying to get the basic shapes of the figure, so don't worry about the details just yet. Next, lay in the basic colour and shapes for the face (**Fig03**). I felt the need for some more colours in the background, so I added some yellows to the ground and brought them up behind the character, and also onto his legs (**Fig04**).

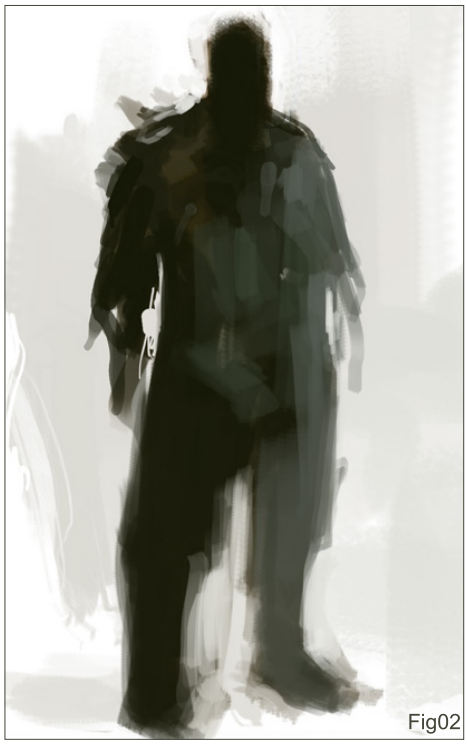

Fig02


Fig03


Fig04


Fig05a


Fig05b


Fig05c

ADDING THE DETAIL

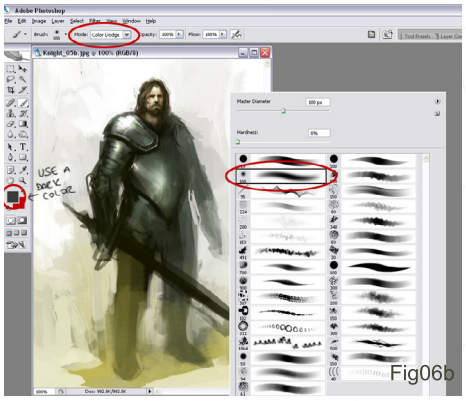
Usually I block in more of the armour shapes before I work more on the head, but this time I am going to finish up the head first so that I can focus more on the armour (**Fig05a**). I wanted this guy to be a rough and tough knight, not just another big brute, but one that is proud and charismatic. Another way to make someone look more heroic is to elongate their proportions. Usually I make them around 8-9 heads tall. Now that I have the head down, I can start blocking in the armour. I wasn't really sure what the armour was going to look like, so I just started throwing down paint (**Fig05b**). The shape I put down for the pauldron didn't really make any sense, so I start cutting away pieces and trying to give it some more form and function (**Fig05c**). One thing you always need to be aware of when designing a character is whether or not they could actually function. It's nice to make them look cool, but a lot of the time, especially in the gaming industry, the character will need to be able to animate. This is where your references come in handy. Study how real armour is put together and try to figure out why it was designed a certain way and how it works. I felt like the character was leaning too much, so I rotated him a little counter-clockwise, and gave him hair and a beard (**Fig05d**).

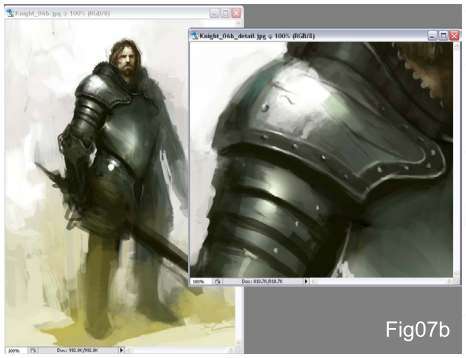

Fig05d

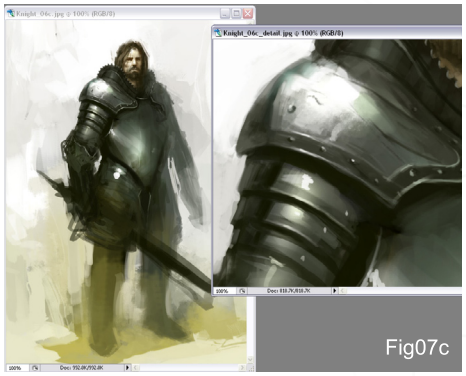
There are many ways to paint in the highlights, one of which is to use the colour dodge tool (**Fig06a & b**). I know people always say to never use colour dodge, but when used correctly it is a great tool. First you need to pick a dark colour. If you pick a light colour you will overexpose the illustration very quickly. Next, click on the brush tool and go up to the “mode” pull down and select “colour dodge”. You can use any brush you like, but I find it easier to use a soft brush. Sometimes the area you paint will become very saturated, so just go back in with the desaturate brush. For the plates on the arm, I first paint in the curved shadows that they create (**Fig07a & b**). Then I put in some specular highlights, the core shadow, reflected light, and a highlight to the rim of the plates (**Fig07c**).


Fig07a


Fig06a


Fig06b


Fig07b


Fig07c

A lot of people ask me how to get textures in their paintings (**Fig.08**). Most of the time I just paint my textures in manually with my brushes, but sometimes I will overlay a texture from a photo. I found this texture from Barontieri (www.barontieri.com). The easy way to add texture to a painting is to take the texture, copy and paste it into your illustration, and set the layer property to overlay. Then you can knock down the opacity to whatever looks good. In this case I lowered the opacity to 45%. I wasn't really feeling that his pose was fitting with what I had in mind, so I changed around his stance to a more confident pose (**Fig09** & **10**).

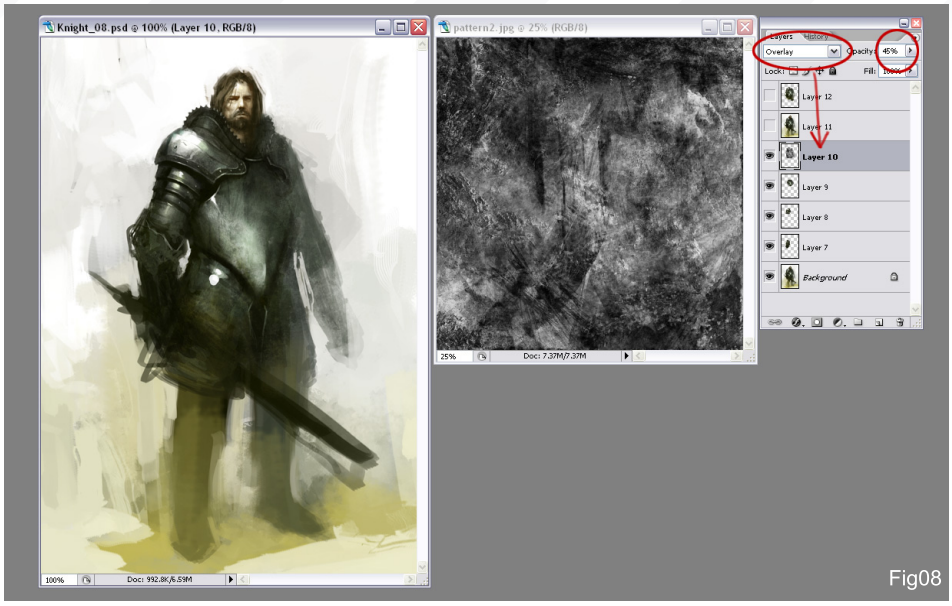
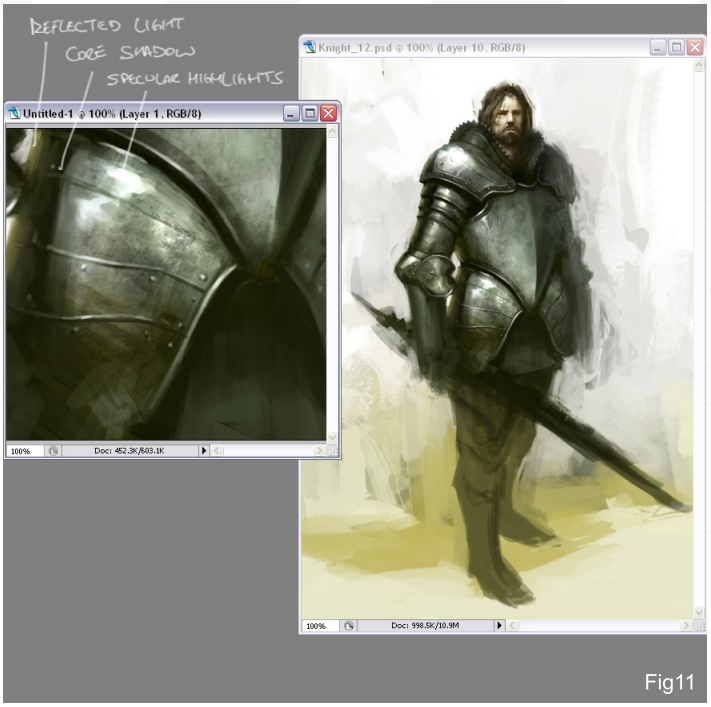


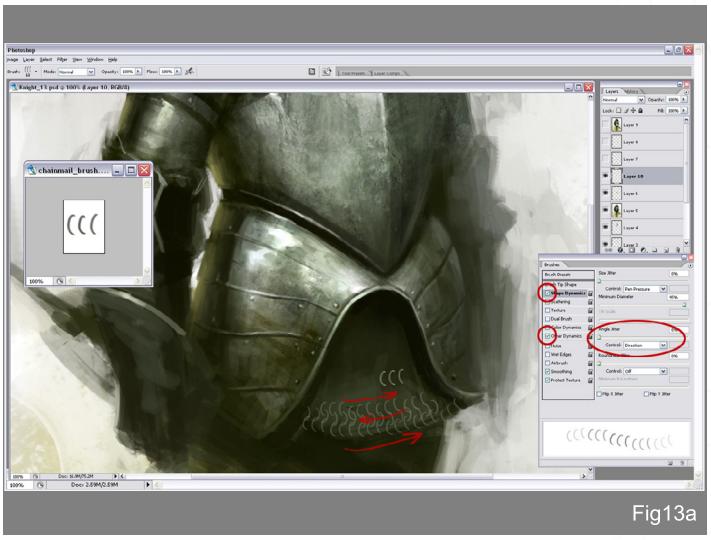
Fig08

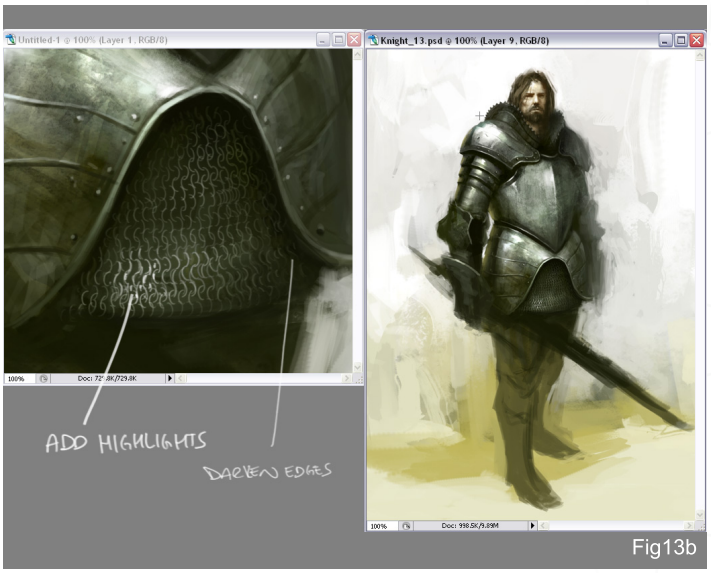

Fig09


Fig10









Again, whenever you are painting something, be sure to remember that there are several parts to describing form, such as the core shadow, reflected light, and the highlight (**Fig11**). Another really cool part to paint of armour is the chain mail (**Fig12** & **13a**). Painting chain mail is really easy and looks cool when you are zoomed out. This time I decided to make a "chain mail brush" for the purpose of this tutorial. Open a new document and draw a few "c" shapes. Make that into a brush and go to the brush controls. Click the box next to "Shape Dynamics" and under "Angle Jitter" set the control to "Direction." Doing this will cause the "c" shapes to follow the direction of your brush. Also click the box next to "Other Dynamics" so that you can have opacity control with your stylus. First lay down one row of chain mail by painting from left to right, then you can paint the next row simply by painting from right to left. The reason we can do this is because we set the angle jitter to direction, allowing us to paint the "c" shapes in both directions without having to rotate the brush. This will let you get the basic idea down. Now go back in and pop in some highlights and darken the edges (**Fig13b**).



Fig14

The armour on the arm is going to be handled the same way I handled the chest armour (**Fig14, 15, 16 & 17a**). First paint in the basic colour, then add in the shadows and highlights.

After that I drop in a texture overlay layer (**Fig17b**). On top of that I use the colour dodge brush to pop in some more lights (**Fig17c**).

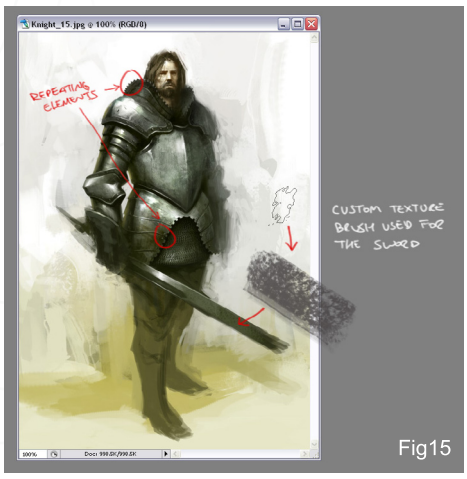


Fig15



Fig16



Fig17a



Fig17b



Fig17c


Fig18a


Fig18b


Fig18c


Fig18d


Fig18e


Fig18f

Go through the same process on the legs as we have used with the arms (**Fig18a, b, c, d, e & f**).

It is a good idea to occasionally take breaks from your painting, so that when you come

back to it you can more easily see mistakes you have made (**Fig19**). You should also regularly flip the image horizontally to see any flaws. I felt like his head needed to be a little bit bigger, so I enlarged that and changed his left arm as well (**Fig20**).

THE FINAL TOUCHES

Now I am going to move to Painter IX to add in some final textures (**Fig21**). Open the image. It is better to add the texture to another layer so that you can erase out parts you don't want. To do this you will need to make a copy of your illustration. Select the entire canvas (Ctrl+a) and


Fig19


Fig20

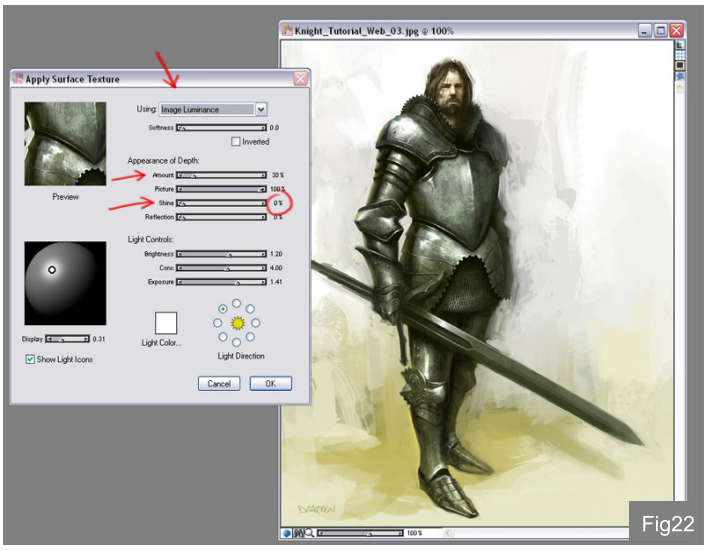


Fig22

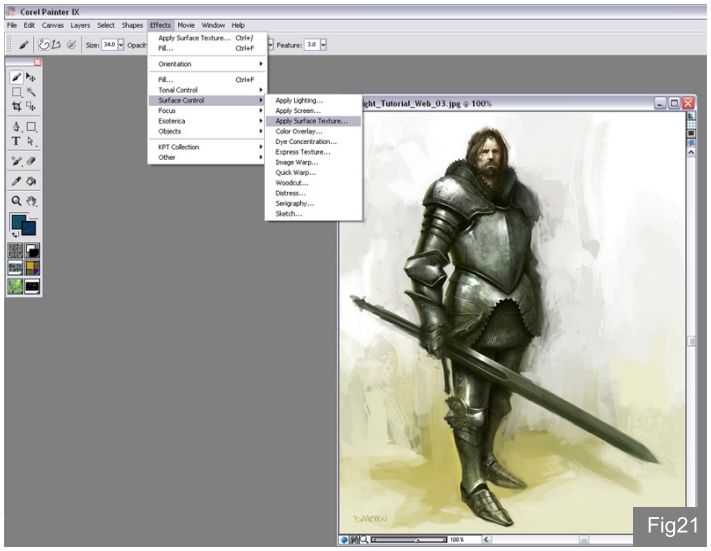
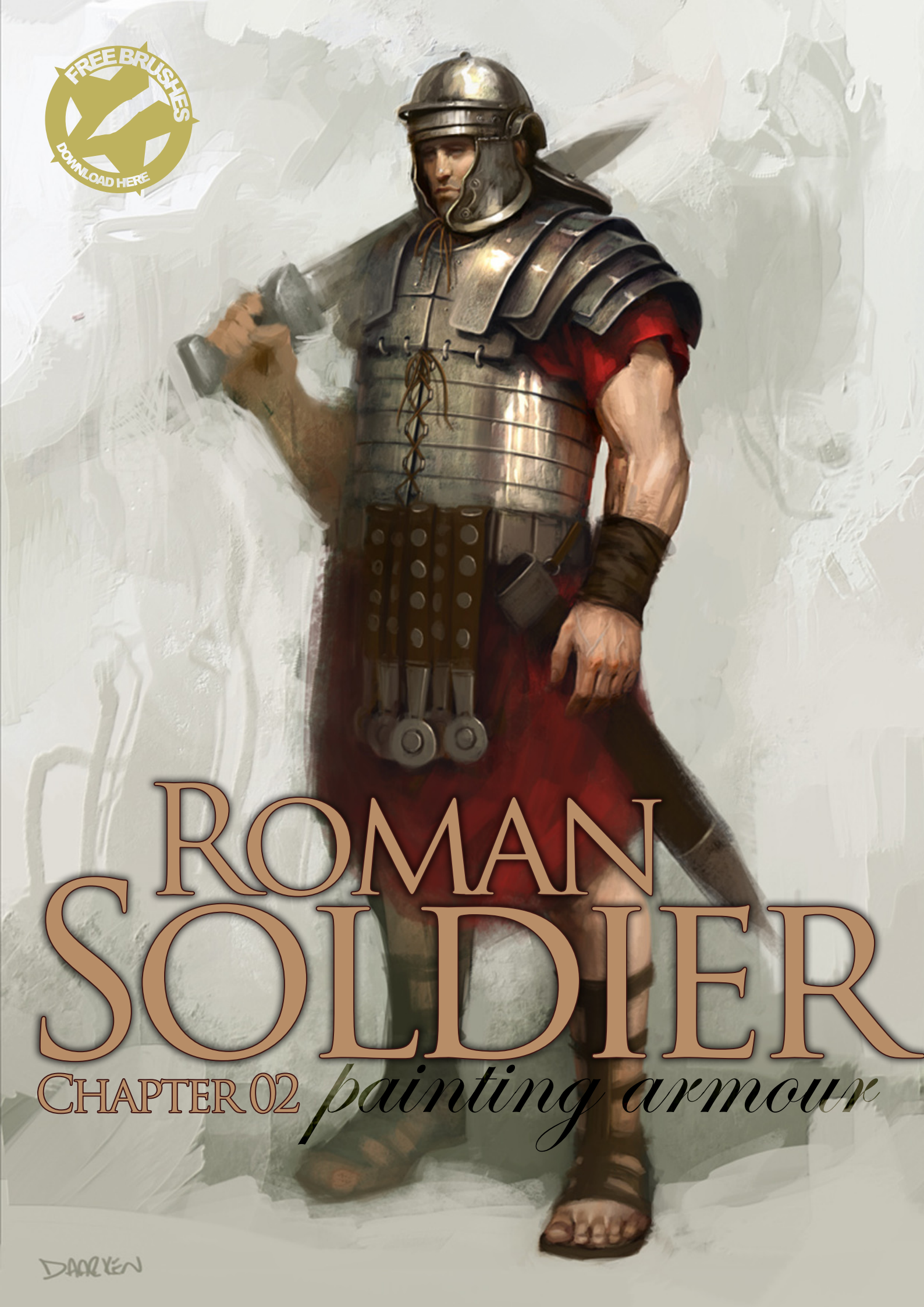


Fig21

then, with the move tool selected, hold down "Alt" and then left-click. This will create a duplicate layer. Now go to Effects – Surface Control – Apply Surface Texture. A dialogue box appears with the different settings. Change the "Using" drop down to "Image Luminance" (**Fig22**). Now go down and make sure that "Shine" is set to 0. Adjust the "Amount" to an amount that looks good to you and then click "ok". Finally, just erase out the parts that you do not want, flatten the image, and you are done. Next month I will show you how to create Ancient Greek/Roman armour! Keep your eyes open!


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RESEARCH

The first thing I usually do when I get a project is to collect all of the reference material that I am going to need. Most of the time you can find everything you need by just “Googling” it. I found some images (**Fig01**) from aurorahistoryboutique.com and www.globaleffects.com. It is a good idea to start building up a large reference folder on your computer so that the next time you need some armour reference you will already have it. Now that we have our reference, we can start the illustration.

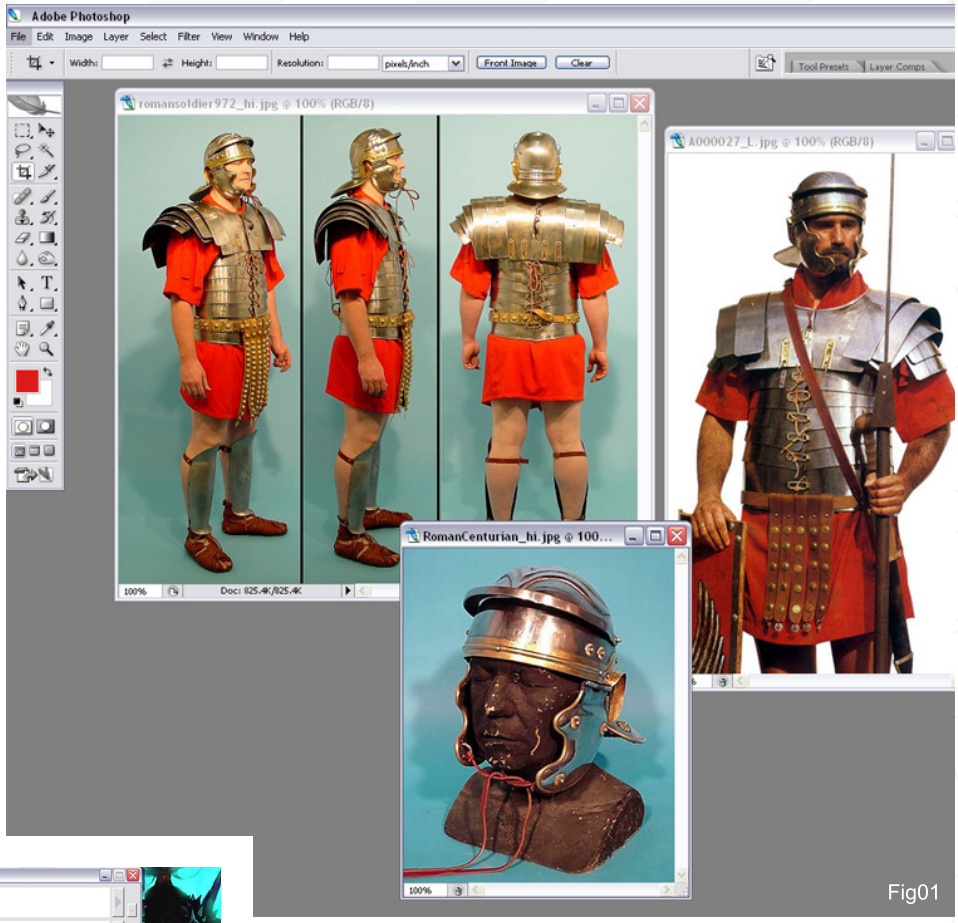


Fig01

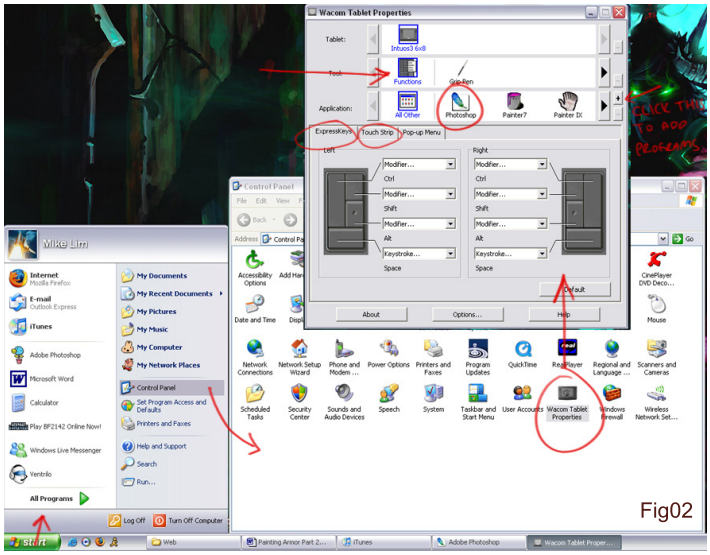


Fig02

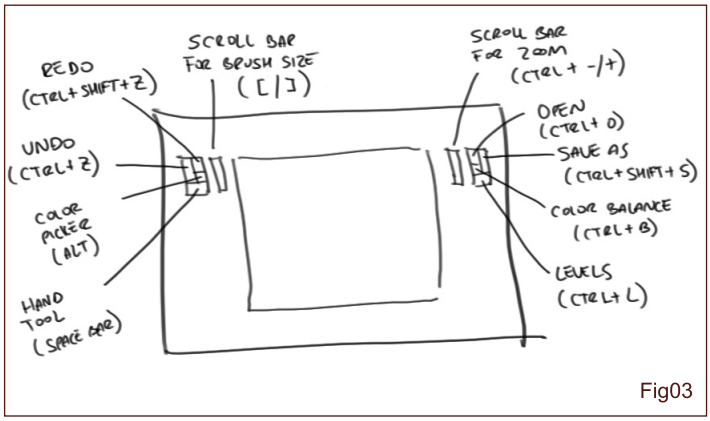


Fig03

PREPARATION

This painting is going to be done primarily in Photoshop CS2, with a little bit of Painter IX for adding texture. I have included the Photoshop CS2 brushes I used so that you can try them out. To load them in Photoshop, click on the Brush tool and then right-click on the canvas. Your Brush menu should open. In the top-right corner is a small triangle button - click that and go to ‘Load Brushes’, then select the file that is included in this tutorial. As for what size file you should work in, I always paint at 300dpi, usually around 3000 pixels wide, depending on whether it is a vertical or horizontal illustration. This time my image is 2404x2905. I forgot to mention this in Part 1 of the tutorial, but you can check part 1 - European Knight - Medieval in the December Issue, so I will bring it up now. If you are going to be working as a professional illustrator, getting a tablet is a necessity. I use a 6x8 ‘Intuos III’ tablet, and I would really recommend it because of the function buttons on the sides. Having these buttons has increased my efficiency and speed dramatically. I usually never even have to use the keyboard except for when I want to resize things or flip my canvas. Plus, the ‘Intuos III’ has a larger stylus, which is more comfortable for your hand. After you install your tablet you need to set up the function keys and touch strip for Photoshop. I am using a PC, so first click on the ‘Start’ button and then go to ‘Control Panel’. Look for the ‘Wacom Tablet Properties’ icon and double-click it. This will bring up the dialogue box.

Click on the 'Functions' button, under 'Tool'. This will allow you to customise your function buttons. You will probably want to make these buttons specific to Photoshop, so if Photoshop is not listed under 'Applications', then just hit the '+' button and you can choose Photoshop from there. Now click on the 'Express Keys' tab. This lets you customise each button separately. Next to that is the 'Touch Strip' tab, which lets you customise the touch strips - it is pretty self explanatory. Close the window when you are finished. **Fig02** is the image of the tablet configuration I mentioned above. People have been asking what I have my tablet function keys set to, so I figured I would draw a really bad drawing of a tablet and label the different buttons, as you can see from **Fig03**.



Fig04



Fig05

THE BLOCK-IN

First I start by putting in some type of background; in this case I just tried to put down some interesting brushstrokes. After I have that done, I start the figure by blocking in the main silhouette. I never do any line drawings for my illustrations because I find it easier for me to paint in the shapes, as opposed to using line. For the face I always lay down a base skin colour and then add in the shapes for the eye sockets and the nose (**Fig04**). Now that I am happy with the figure, I start to block in the shapes of the armour. I am not really sure yet what the armour is going to look like. I have a basic idea since I am doing a Roman soldier, but since I never do thumbnails I usually just go with the flow. I always hated doing thumbnails in school, and once I started freelancing professionally I found that I never had a client ask for thumbnails, so I just never did them. I probably should, since it would probably help with my compositions and to give me a better

idea as to what I am going to paint, instead of constantly changing my illustration.(**Fig05**). At this time I go ahead and jump in with the colour scheme of my illustration. I put down the base red colour for his clothing, as well as a yellow for the armour. I also block in the areas where you can see his skin. A lot of times when I am at this stage I end up putting down some highlights so I can see where I am going. Usually you should hold off on the highlights until the end, but I am impatient. Plus, I know that I will be making the highlights brighter later on (**Fig06**).


Fig06

ADDING THE DETAIL

When I am working on an illustration I always try to keep it zoomed out to 25%. This actually determines what size I make my paper size as well. Basically, I resize the image so that it takes up a fair amount of space in the window at 25% zoom. The reason I work zoomed out is so that I won't get bogged down with detail early on. This always allows me to see the entire illustration as a whole, and I can judge more easily if things look correct. I also constantly flip my canvas horizontally so that I can more easily see any


Fig08

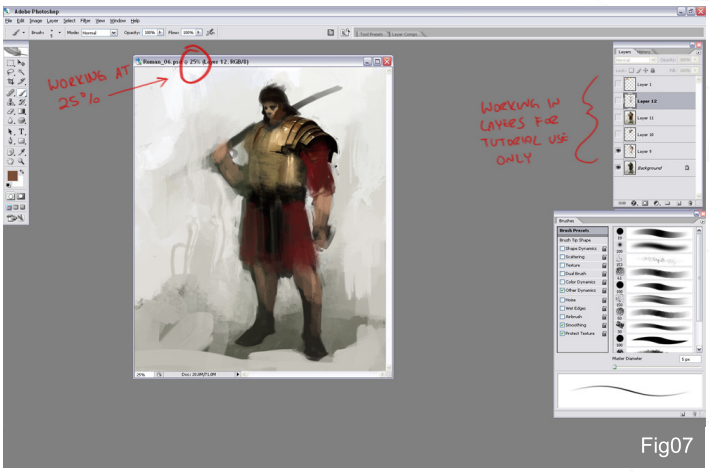


Fig07

errors. Even when I do start to detail things I normally try not to zoom in. I also try to work on one layer as well. The only reason I am working in several layers on this illustration is because it makes it easier to save my different steps for this tutorial (**Fig07**). In this step I just made a minor change in the colour. I believe I added more blue and cyan. During the

process of any illustration I tend to change the colours a lot. The colours I start with are just a starting point, never an ending point (**Fig08**). After looking at his armour for a while, I began to notice some technical errors. If you follow through with the shape of the second armour segment - the blue line - you can see that the shape I initially drew for it was too far over to the right. You wouldn't actually see it because it would be behind his arm (**Fig09**). Not only that, but I also felt like the first two armour plates weren't wrapping around correctly, so in the next step I am going to fix that as well. The easy way to fix this is by using the distort tool. First, use the lasso tool to select the area that you want to fix, then go to 'Edit > Transform > Distort'. Now just drag the lower-left corner and hit 'Enter'. All you have to do now is go back and fix up some areas, and you're done. **Fig10** is the result of fixing. I mentioned earlier that I was going to

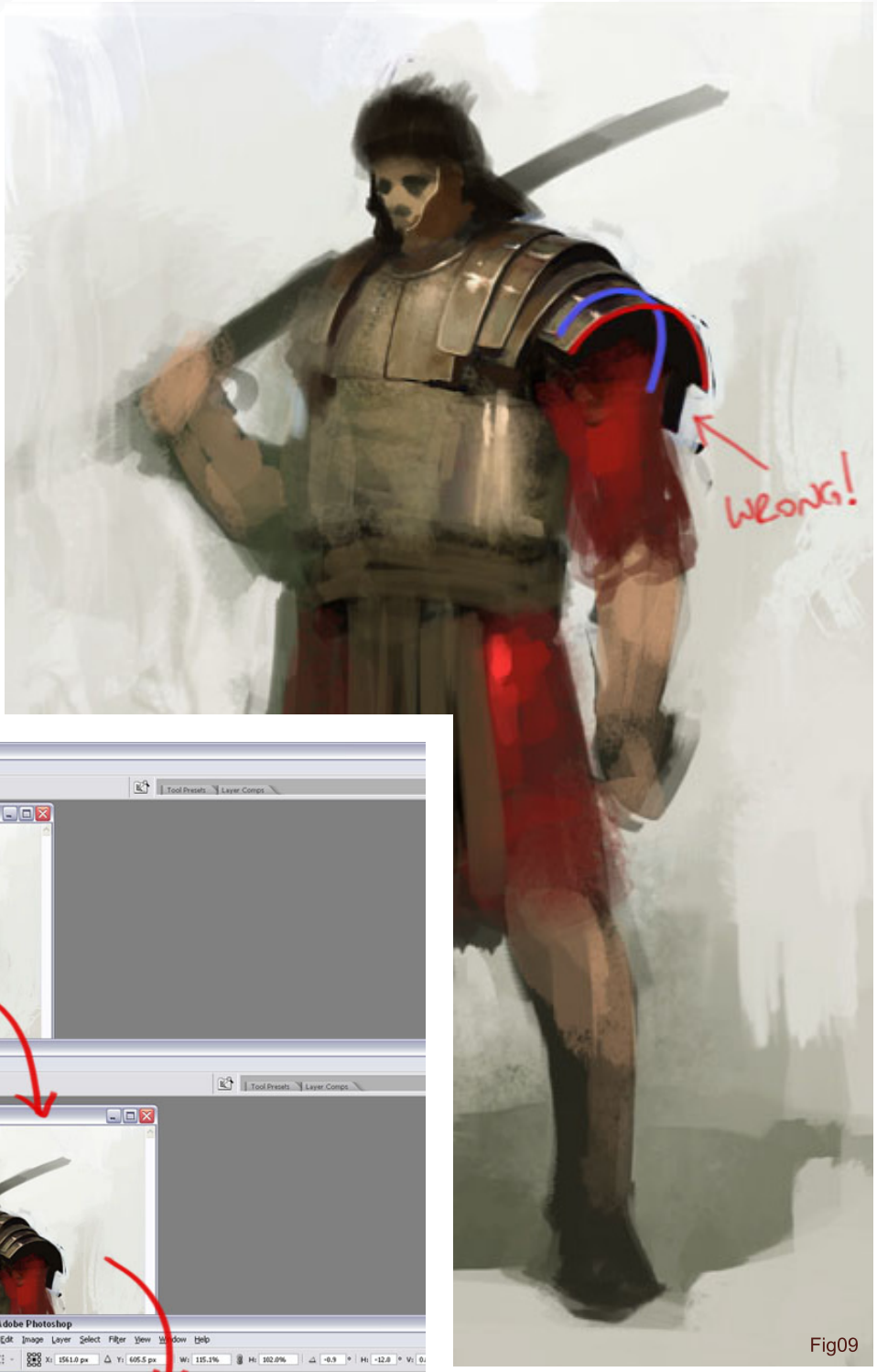


Fig09

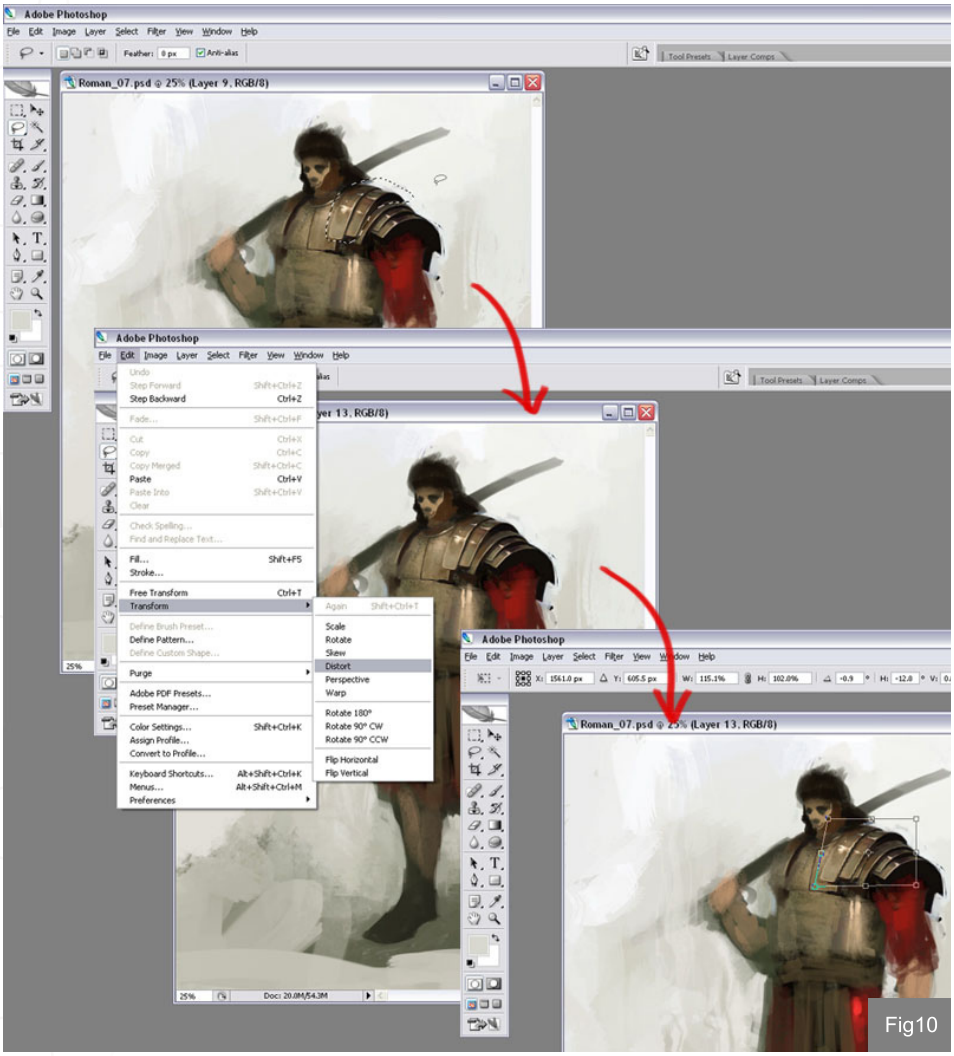


Fig10

make the highlights brighter; I like to use the colour dodge setting on the brush to accomplish this, not the actual dodge tool. I added an example of what it would look like if you used the dodge tool. Basically the dodge tool sucks out the colour and makes it look really bad. The way to use the colour dodge setting with a brush is to click on the Brush tool, then go up and set the 'Mode' to 'Colour Dodge' from the drop-

down menu. Next you want to pick a darker colour, or else you will risk overexposing the image very quickly. By using a dark colour you can build up the highlights in a more controlled manner. Also use a soft brush, like the airbrush shown in **Fig11**. In Part 1 of the tutorial series - the medieval knight - I showed how to add textures from images. This time I used more

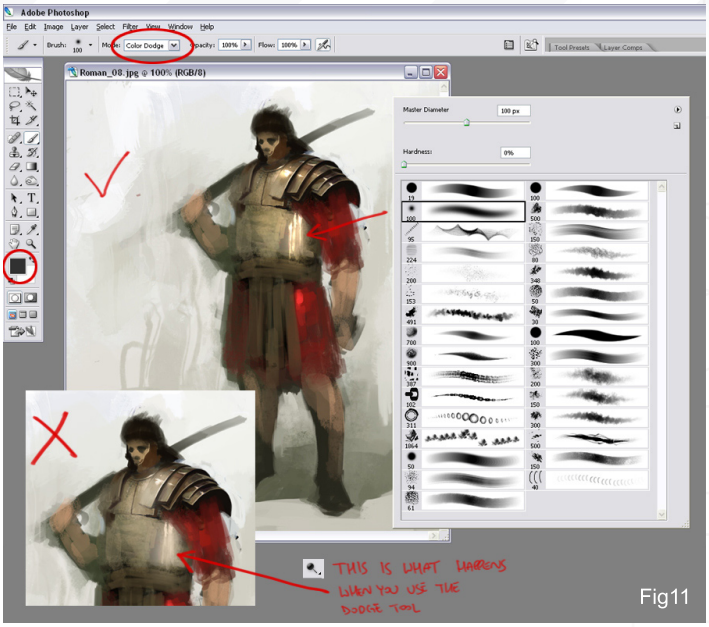


Fig11


Fig13

textured brushes. One brush I used is kind of like a chalk brush. You can see what it looks like with and without the dual brush setting. I used this brush to build up the texture on the armour (**Fig12**).

THE FINAL TOUCHES

Now that I have all the basic shapes and colours down I can just go in and finish off with the details, like the separation in the different armour plates, rivets, rings, etc. (**Fig13-15**). I also begin to spend more time on the face **(Fig16** &**17**). Another way to get some cool textures is to take this to Painter IX. First, drop all your layers, and then select the whole canvas. Make sure you have the 'Layer Adjuster' tool selected, then hold 'Alt' and left-click on the painting. This makes a copy of your painting. Now select the top layer

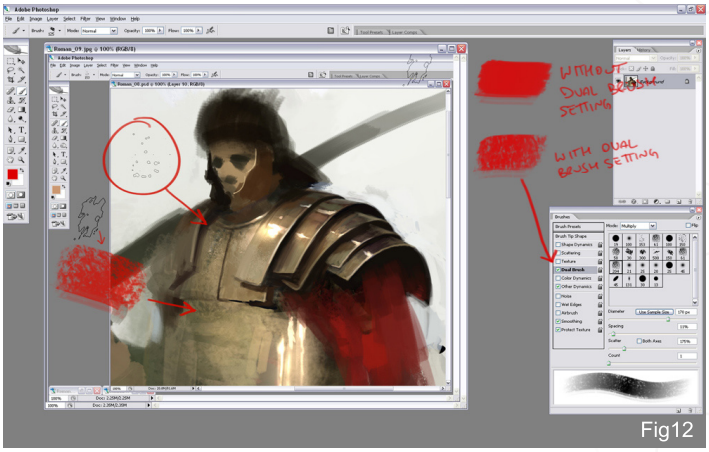


Fig12



Fig14



Fig15



Fig16



Fig17

and go to ‘Effects > Surface Control > Apply Surface Texture’. Under ‘Using’ select ‘Image Luminance’. Make sure that you have ‘Shine’ set to zero. You can also now adjust the ‘Amount’ to whatever you think looks good. This effect enhances your brushwork and will also make your painting look sharper (**Fig18**). The arm wasn’t really attaching correctly so I went back and painted in an arm without the sleeve. After getting the arm correct, I paint the sleeve on top of the arm (**Fig19&20**).

One thing you want to remember when painting armour is that armour reflects everything around it. In this case I made sure to put in the reflection of the arm and the red sleeve (**Fig21-24**). The painting is nearing the end, and only a few more parts need refining (**Fig25-27**). I also now start to put in the final little details, like the straps

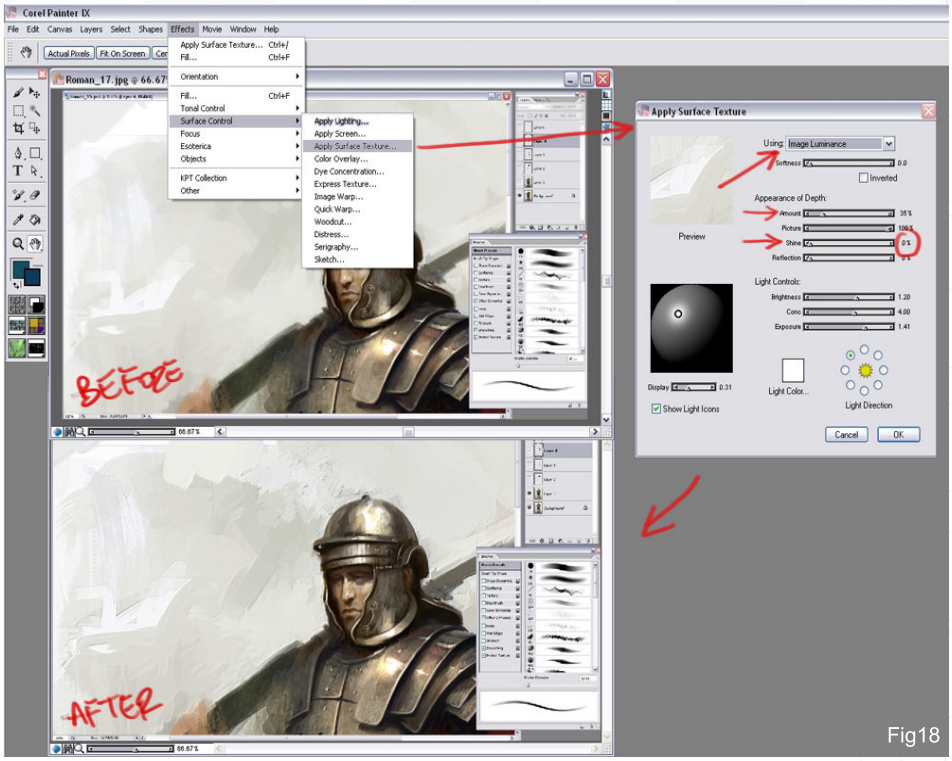


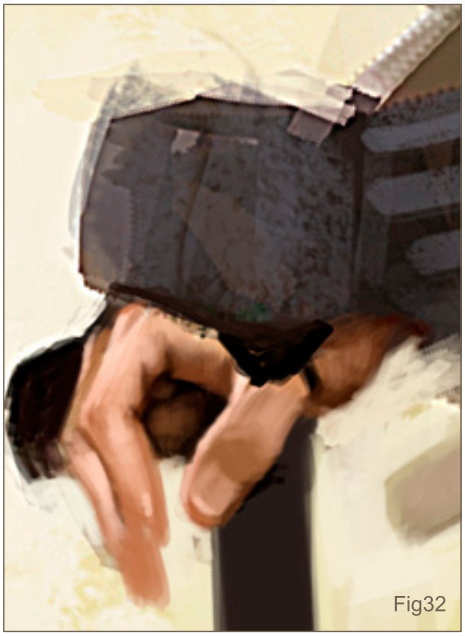
Fig18


Fig19


Fig20



Fig31


Fig32

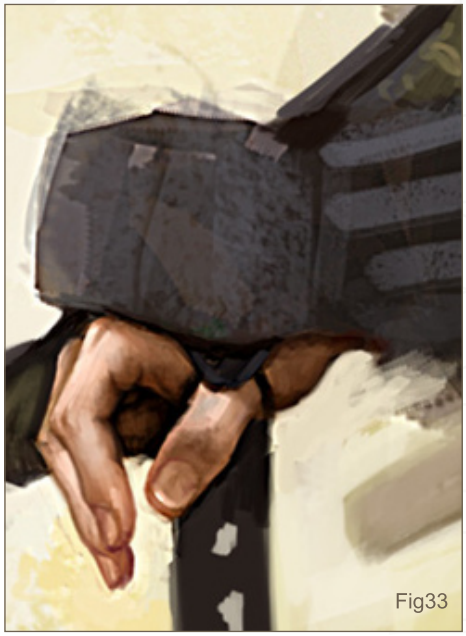

Fig33


Fig34

Fig35

Fig36



Fig37



Fig38

the painting very quickly. Using a dark colour allows you to build up the highlight more slowly and in a more controlled manner. (**Fig37**+**38**) I took out the armour on his arm and changed the colour of his clothing by using colour balance (ctrl+b) and levels (ctrl+L) (**Fig39**) I actually just cut out the previous armour I had and put it on a new layer, and then erased out the parts between the metal plates. I then connected them with little rings. (**Fig40**) For the lower part of the arm I wanted some chain mail, so instead of drawing each individual ring I made a chain mail brush. Just open a new document, draw a circle, and then go to “edit – define brush preset.” This will stick the brush at the end of your brush library. Now you can select the brush and then open the brush controls. Under “brush tip shape” change the spacing so that each circle touches the edge of the next circle. I then clicked on “shape dynamics” and set the angle jitter to direction (you don’t really have to do that with this brush since it is



Fig39

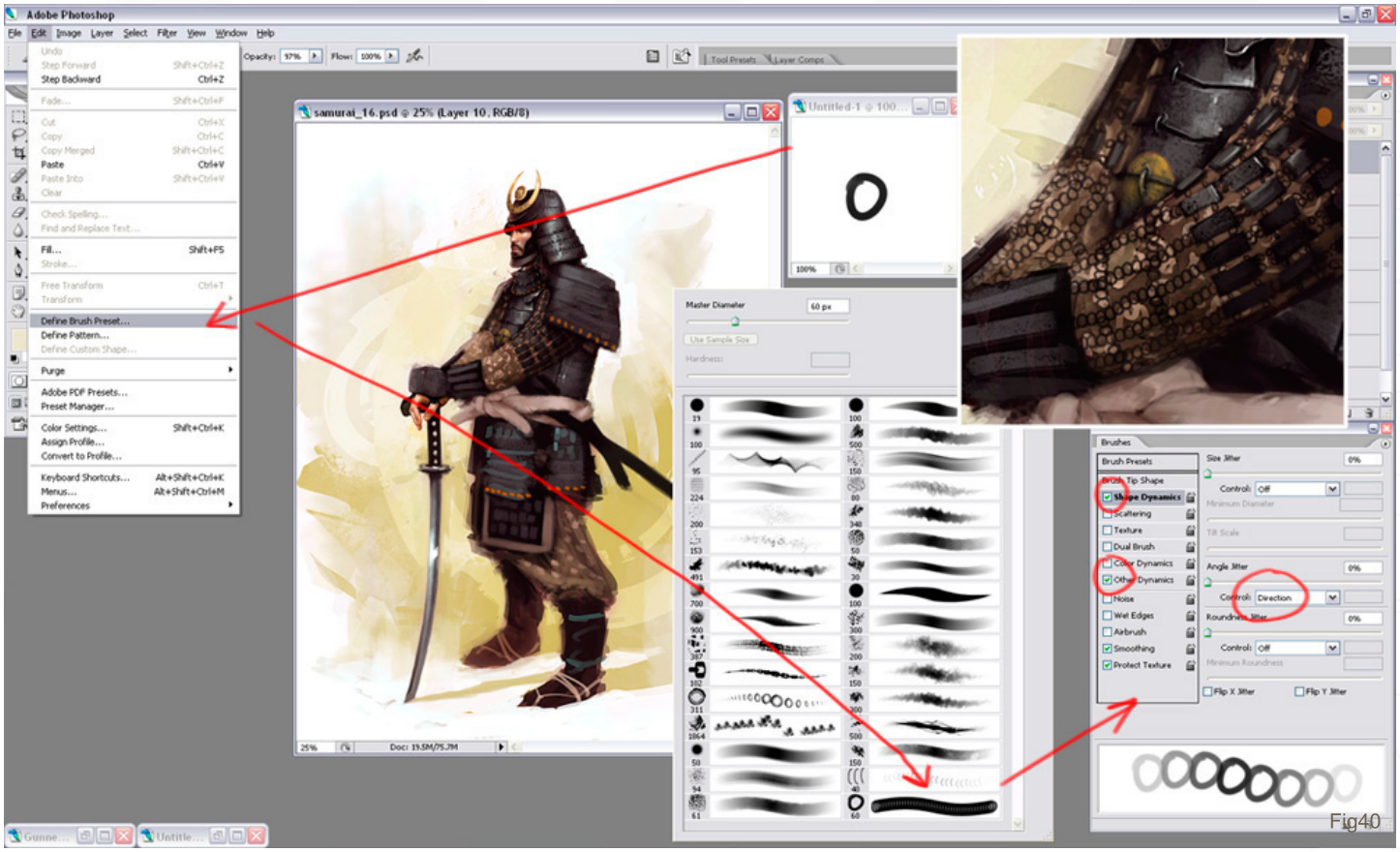


Fig40


Fig41


Fig42

pretty much round anyway) and also the other dynamics so that I can get opacity change with pressure. Be sure to save your new brush!

THE FINAL TOUCHES

(**Fig41**+**42**) The belt was a good place to try and add another type of material to the painting. I wanted to make it look like it was made from silk, so I painted it with no texture and made it very shiny. I also did some colour dodge on the light areas.

(**Fig43**+**44**) Now I am just adding in the final highlights to his shoulder armour, adding the


Fig43



Fig44



Fig45



Fig46

lacing, and refining a few things below his waist. (**Fig45+46**) After I finish adding the laces to his shoulder armour, I use the burn tool on some of the ones in the shadow, as well as darkening the core shadow. I also did another unsharp mask filter to his pants and to some other areas as well just to tighten things up. All that is left now is to sign it!

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For more from this artist visit
http://www.daarken.com
Or contact
daarkenart@daarken.com

ELEMENTS

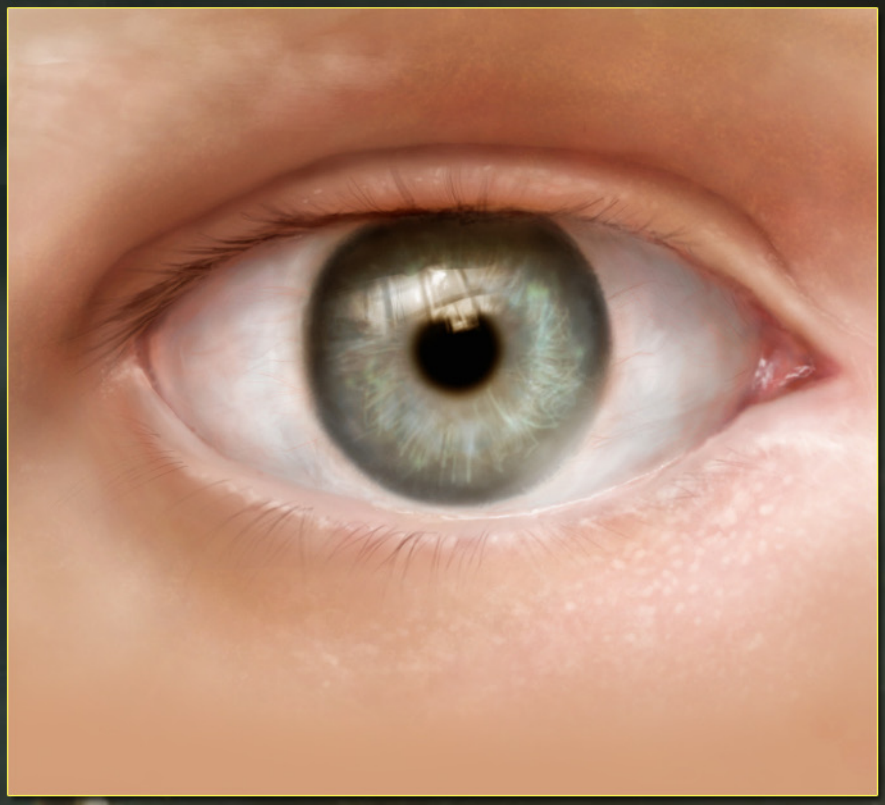
Digital Painting Downloadable eBook Tutorial Series

Introduction

The 'elements' series is a guide to 2D Digital painting and can be followed in most software packages supporting paintbrushes and layers.

In the first two E-Book volumes, we have choosen some of the most used aspects of digital painting, we cover such topics as painting eyes, fabric, fire & smoke, flesh wounds and fur & hair and asked 2 or 3 professional artists to cover a specific theme or 'element', resulting in 2 or 3 different styles and techniques which can be viewed side by side. With the help of such talented and experienced artist as Benita Winckler, Natascha Roeoesli, Richard Tilbury, Stephanie Loftis, Adonihs and Shane Madden.

Volume 3 of The 'Elements' series follows cartoon and comic artist, Carlos Cabrera, as he takes a basic scene, created by 3DTotal's in-house artist Richard Tilbury, and transforms them into five different weather conditions.







Volume 1

Chapter 1: Painting Eyes
Chapter 2: Painting Fabric
Chapter 3: Painting Fire & Smoke
Chapter 4: Painting Flesh Wounds
Chapter 5: Painting Fur & Hair

Volume 2

Chapter 1: Painting Rock & Stone
Chapter 2: Painting Sky
Chapter 3: Painting Skin
Chapter 4: Painting Trees
Chapter 5: Painting Water

Volume 3

Chapter 1: Sandstorm
Chapter 2: Twister
Chapter 3: Rainstorm
Chapter 4: Snowstorm
Chapter 5: Heatwave



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Speed Painting

digital painting tutorial series volume 1

Introduction

This 102-page eBook is a collection of "Speed Painting" tutorials which have been created by some of the top digital painters around today. The idea behind this tutorial series was for the artist to interpret a one-line descriptive brief (provided by us!), create a speed painting from it and then produce a tutorial showing and explaining each stage of production of the artwork. Some of the artists have also kindly created some unique brushes which can also be downloaded at the end of their Speed Painting tutorials. This downloadable PDF eBook can be followed in most 2D software packages that support paintbrushes and layers.



The featured artists are:

Levente Peterffy
Mikko Kinnunen
Carlos Cabrera
Mike Corriero
Rich Tilbury
Paul Davies
Andreas Rocha
Mark Muniz
Fred Augis
Emrah Elmasli

Chapter 01: Forest Fire
Chapter 02: Scary animal emerging from a forest
Chapter 03: Ship hit by torpedo
Chapter 04: Tornado moving towards farm
Chapter 05: The room made the explorers feel sick with the thoughts as to what had happened there in years gone by
Chapter 06: City street devastated by war
Chapter 07: Evolution had played its part on these creatures as their world heated up, but the thousands of years of forced hard labor had more impact
Chapter 08: The party entertainers' real twisted identities were very far from their bright, colorful disguises
Chapter 09: The citizens of the flooded city now resided in the tallest buildings connected by makeshift bridges.

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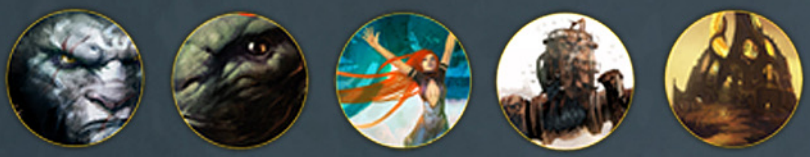
Custom Brushes

Digital Painting Tutorial Series EBook

Introduction:

The Custom Brushes eBook is a 72-page guide on how to create your very own set of custom brushes. We have asked industry professionals from the likes of Carlos Cabrera, Kim Taylor, Melanie Delon, Marc Brunet, Mike Corriero, Richard Tilbury, Brian Recktenwald, Mike Lim (aka Daarken), George Patsouras, Larla Ortiz and Ignacio Bazan Lazcano to create easy-to-follow guides/tutorials on how to create Custom Brushes. As well as giving expert tuition, some of the artists have also supplied their brushes and these can be downloaded at the beginning and end of the tutorials, where available.

This tutorial eBook also includes 84 free downloadable brushes.



Chapter 01: Creating a brush from scratch in Photoshop
Chapter 02: Using Photographs online to produce a custom brush
Chapter 03: Scanning in objects and turning them into a brush
Chapter 04: Chamber
Chapter 05: Creating your own set custom brushes
Chapter 06: Custom Brushes
Chapter 07: Skin brushes
Chapter 08: Custom Brushes
Chapter 09: Custom Brushes
Chapter 10: Old Woman
Chapter 11: Special Effects
Chapter 12: Artistic Hair & Skin Textured Brushes
Chapter 13: 'Save Us
Chapter 14: Custom Brushes

The artists featured are:

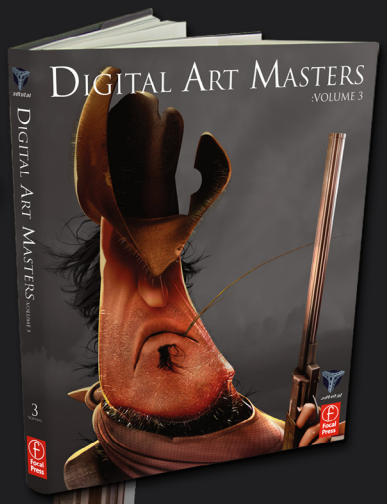
Mike Corriero,
Richard Tilbury,
Kim Taylor,
Carlos Cabrera,
Melanie Delon,
Marc Brunet,
Karla 'Icon' Ortiz,
Brian Recktenwald,
Daarken (Mike Lim),
George Patsouras &
Ignacio Bazán Lazcano



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Gerhard Mozsi
John Wu
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